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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 887  
By Person

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. Patricia Person Ray  
on the occasion of her retirement from the  
Shelby County School System.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly takes great pleasure in paying tribute to those  
outstanding Tennesseans who have dedicated their professional lives to nurturing and  
developing this state's most precious resource: our children; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Patricia Person Ray has announced her plans to retire after twenty-five  
years of meritorious service to the children of Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray's creativity and leadership have made a positive difference in the  
lives of thousands of young people during her illustrious tenure with the Shelby County School  
System; and

WHEREAS, we wish to extend our heartiest congratulations to Dr. Ray as she returns to  
St. Mary's Episcopal School to lead the faculty, staff and students at her alma mater, from which  
she graduated in 1965; and

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WHEREAS, Patti Person Ray began her illustrious career with Shelby County Schools in 1975 at Riverdale Elementary School as a social studies teacher for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students; and

WHEREAS, during the ten years that she served at Riverdale, she was actively engaged in sponsoring several student organizations, including the Student Government Association and the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade cheerleading squad; she also directed numerous school plays and served as a member of several systemwide curriculum development committees; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, Patti Ray accepted a teaching position at Germantown High School, where she taught American History and Contemporary Issues for the next three years and sponsored the Freshmen Cheerleaders; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray continued her dedicated and proficient sponsorship of the Freshmen Cheerleaders in 1988, when she was appointed Assistant Principal at Germantown High School; the squad won six National titles during their glory years under her tutelage; and

WHEREAS, during the four years that Dr. Ray served so astutely as Assistant Principal, she instituted several new programs at Germantown High School, including the innovative Back-to-Class Program, which she designed to improve student attendance and which has been used as a model by many other county schools; and

WHEREAS, Patti Ray was bestowed the University of Memphis Outstanding Dissertation Award upon completion of her Doctor of Education degree in 1991; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray was appointed as Vice Principal of Germantown High School in 1992; during the four years that she held this important position, Patti developed and/or implemented many praiseworthy student programs to assist in meeting identified needs, including TAP (Teacher Advocate Program), which was designed to assist students at-risk by assigning a teacher advocate to mentor and assist each of them; the Water Education Team (WET) Program, which was designed to instruct students in environmental issues and solutions;

and the F.R.I.E.N.D.S. program, which was designed to match special needs students with "typical" students in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters relationship; and

WHEREAS, during this time, she also wrote several grants to provide funding for the aforementioned programs and several others; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray received the ultimate professional compliment when she was recognized as Tennessee's Assistant Principal of the Year in 1995; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray chaired the committee and was responsible for writing and submitting the application for the Blue Ribbon Schools Award presented to Germantown High School; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, Dr. Ray became an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Leadership at the University of Memphis, a position in which she continues to serve with the greatest integrity and acumen; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Patti Ray was selected to serve as the first Principal of Cordova High School in 1996; and

WHEREAS, during the three years of operation of Cordova High School, Dr. Ray has adroitly facilitated the development of a strong student-centered program: students are provided information about the most effective ways to study and their optimum style of learning; teachers utilize instructional techniques that accommodate different learning styles; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray has implemented the TAP (Teacher Advocate Program) she designed while at Germantown High School and the Saturday Scholars Review Sessions to mentor students; and

WHEREAS, she has also written a Goals 2000 Grant, W.O.L.F. (Wildlife Learning in the Field) Project, to further enhance student learning; and

WHEREAS, the viability of Dr. Ray's stated desire to "make high school more personalized" is evidenced by the many success stories emanating from Cordova's many proud parents and well-rounded students; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray's unremitting dedication to her students and her consummate professionalism earned her nomination as the Shelby County Education Association's Distinguished Administrator in 1995 and 1999 and receipt of the prestigious Northern Life Unsung Hero National Finalist Award in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray truly epitomizes the spirit and commitment that is characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, she is the daughter of the late Curtis and Helen Person; Mr. Person was a world renowned amateur golfer, having won the prestigious U.S.G.A. Senior Amateur Championship in 1968 and 1969; and

WHEREAS, she is the proud sister of Senator Curtis Person, Jr., and his wife, Geraldean; Senator Person serves the state with probity as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and is now in his 34<sup>th</sup> year in office; and

WHEREAS, she feels fortunate to share love and companionship with her husband, William Barry Ray, who shares her passion for excellence in education; he serves as Principal of the Upper School at Memphis University School; and

WHEREAS, she is the proud parent of two sons and one daughter-in-law, Wade Harrison Crump of Palm Springs, California and Wesley Hamilton Crump, who serves as a Deputy with the Shelby County Sheriff's Department, and his wife, Stephanie; and

WHEREAS, she is also a devoted grandmother to her six-year-old grandson, Wesley Alexander Hamilton Crump; and

WHEREAS, professionals of Dr. Ray's eminent stature do not often walk among us; her many innovative ideas and programs for the classroom and beyond, her stalwart dedication to the precepts of quality education and the welfare of all children, and the sheer delight she takes in the personal relationships she has with her students and her peers, all combine to make her an extraordinary educator, public servant, and human being; and

WHEREAS, as Dr. Ray answers the tantalizing call of retirement, it is most appropriate that we should wish her well in her new and challenging position as the Principal of the Upper School at St. Mary's Episcopal School; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Dr. Patricia Person Ray on the occasion of her retirement from the Shelby County School System. We salute her excellent career as a teacher and administrator who has served the children of Shelby County with the greatest distinction, applauding her ongoing commitment to quality education at all levels. We wish her much continued success and happiness as the Principal of the Upper School at St. Mary's Episcopal School and in all of her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.